

## **UDRMP Preferred Alternative Subcommittee**

### **April 27, 2004**

**Location: Crook County Library 1-3 pm**

Present:

Katy Yoder  
Clay Penhollow  
Sarah Thomas  
Nancy Gilbert  
Ed Faulkner  
Kent Gill  
Barbara Pieper

Mimi Graves  
Anne Holmquist  
Brian Ferry  
Jamie Hildebrandt  
Jerry Cordova  
Darrell Pieper  
Terry Morton, Facilitator

BLM: Bill Dean, Steve Castillo, Mollie Chaudet, Robert Towne, Mike Williams

### **Terry conducted introductions, summarized topics**

#### **Vegetation – Steve Castillo**

##### **Summary of Public Comments**

Many comments were indirectly concerned w/vegetation

Tribal concerns about traditional use areas—identification, mapping, cooperating w/tribes—page of plants in plan

Impacts of vegetation management on recreation/trails—veg as screening, visual quality, helps trail management. Need to work w/ rec planners. Can help trail management. Trails designed for education/interpretation

Impacts on visuals from vegetation treatments thinning, burning—lots of options. We have guidelines for integrating these into management such as thinning, feathering edges. Important to be proactive. Can enhance visuals through treatment.

**Question:** What is a treatment? *Treatments can include a wide variety of vegetation modification including : cutting or mowing brush, prescribed burning, thinning, tree removal, regeneration or other commercial timber harvests.*

**Question:** What is wildland-urban interface?—*Area where wildlands meet human development. Width varies by type of vegetation varies from 200' - 1 ½ miles. Veg managed with primary value being to reduce hazardous fuels adjacent to communities at risk, and to provide safe zone for firefighters.*

Current vs. Historic Change—Mollie noted that this is the topic that we will be looking for consensus. Previous 3 discussed just for information.

How will this affect private landowners?

Give examples—If we improve habitat conditions adjacent to private lands then there is a concern that sage grouse would move into private lands and as a result limitations will be imposed on use of private lands.

How did plan treat “historic range”? Steve will detail later.

Concern that historic range doesn’t provide for sufficient flexibility.

Grazing, Cost vs. Benefits

**Question:** What is the considered the “historic” time that is referred to in this range?  
*1840 to 1900 range of conditions and species that vary according to natural disturbance regimes. Primary disturbance is fire.*

## **Proposed Changes**

Management as under current Brothers-La Pine RMP:

- Management not ecosystem-based
- Veg management more narrow focused, based on individual resource objectives: ie. “juniper and brush control,” “improve range condition,” “salvage beetle-killed timber,” “reduce extreme fire hazard.” Single species management.
- Veg treatments allocated based on grazing allotments (4,700 acres/year)

## 2. Preferred Alternative as it is now:

Broader based management

“Historic Range of Variability (HRV)”

- Uses HRV as the basis for most vegetation treatments outside wildland-urban interface (WUI).
- Restoration toward historic condition
  - Shrub-steppe (high priority watersheds, sage grouse habitat)
  - Old-growth structure (juniper and PP)
- Emphasizes hazardous fuels reduction in WUIs, mainly by mechanical (common to all) may burn piles, some underburning
  - Assumption that WUI treatments would be protection. But providing for certain elements of historic range can be provided, eg may promote oldgrowth but w/out ladder fuel component
- Emphasizes reintroduction of fire (prescribed burning) in non-WUI
- Treats large areas on landscape scale (watersheds or ecosystems)
- Treats more acres in larger units (more efficient): 15,350 acres/year.

It was noted that we should recognize limits due to human uses

### 3. Proposed Change to Preferred Alternative:

- Change title from HRV to something else to avoid potential misinterpretation: “Aggressive Restoration” “Assertive? Restoration,” “Broadscale Restoration,” Ideas?????
- Focus on restoration and function of key components of shrubb-steppe or pp rather than HRV.
- Acknowledge substantial human development, occupation, and influences in plan area
- Include specific emphasis on considering the social and economic factors in veg management decisions (ie. fire protection, recreation, visuals, hunting)
- Acknowledge inability to get very close to HRV in developed portions of Plan Area.
- Emphasize application of HRV concept more in the uninhabited portions of the Plan Area, less in developed portions of Plan Area.

### 4. Management Implications of Proposed Change

- Builds in more flexibility
- Better clarifies actual management intent – blends social/economic
- Better acknowledges human effects on long-term landscape conditions
- Maintains restoration of important ecological components (above).

### **Discussion**

What is the benefit of juniper removal in PP area—Reduces competition, stress on PP

What is the benefit of juniper removal in shrub-steppe? More grasses, shrub, benefits hydrologic function in high priority watersheds, degree to which grasses or shrubs are restored is dependent upon site conditions.

What is concern? Social and economic, use of pvt. Property

Adding structures, homes, development in exclusive farm use area may be dependent upon wildlife useage on adjacent lands. If those lands are managed for wildlife habitat, could affect whether those approvals could be made or not.

Public lands become more and more important for those wildlife species exactly because of the increasing development. We keep moving the wildlife “over there” or “out there” where there isn’t any development, and those places are getting smaller and smaller all the time. We need to use the areas that are undeveloped to provide for that wildlife and not keep expecting that somehow their needs will be met “out there”.

Change to historic range may change distribution of big game. Return may reduce big game numbers.

Hard time connecting veg management with what a land owner could do on pvt. lands.

Changing conditions can affect wl, eg. Sage grouse with subsequent restrictions on private lands.

Need to find areas for restoration away from urban fringe.

Plan does not cover large enough area to extend beyond urban influence, and the area adjacent to these increasingly urban areas is important.

Will numbers in comparison table for alternatives change? *No, but description of preferred (vocabulary) will change. Change proposed is not substantive in the overall emphasis, more a clarification of how we intend to implement it.*

Concerned about wildlife will proposal to change meet wildlife objectives. Last week, ODFW had proposed no net loss of habitat, or something similar related to vegetation conditions in the North Millican area. Not consensus that there is a need to provide for no net loss.(for discussion and consensus agreement – see notes 4/15).

*Restoration of shrub steppe not necessarily in conflict with providing habitat for big game, human disturbance is probably the main factor driving a need for maintaining cover that might not match with sage grouse needs.*

In the Current Preferred Alternative, there is clear direction to continue to work with ODFW to meet wildlife objectives within the habitat capabilities of the area. That objective is not proposed for change. BLM will continue to provide habitat for species, and ODFW to manage the species and set target numbers.

**CONSENSUS QUESTION → Can we adopt the proposed changes to the vegetation management text?**

**Consensus → 2/3s/4s/5 –**

### **Open Public Forum**

No members of the public were present. Alternate Issue Team members were invited to come to the table and join in the discussion.

### **Next Meeting**

Vegetation topic was expected to extend to Tuesday, May 4 from 9-12. Since topic was completed, that portion of the meeting was cancelled. Next meeting will still be May 4, from 12-3, topics: focus group presentations on Minerals and the Military.

Meeting was adjourned.